

## Message Text

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11  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-07 /077 W  
----- 080921

P R 021015Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5274  
INFO AMEMBASSY DOHA  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 3234

E.O: 11652: GDS  
TAGS : PINT, TC  
SUBJECT : SHAIKH ZAYID WAS UNANIMOUSLY RE-ELECTED NOVEMBER 30 BY  
HIS FELLOW RULERS AS PRESIDENT OF UAE FOR ADDITIONAL FIVE YEAR  
TERM. DUBAI RULER, SHAIKH RASHID, WAS SIMILARLY RE-ELECTED AS  
VICE PRESIDENT. THIS PREDICATABLE OUTCOME TO THE FIVE MONTH HASSLE  
OVER THE SUCCESSION ISSUE (REFTEL AND PREVIOUS) WAS APPARENTLY  
ANTYING BUT EASY, HOWEVER.

2. SUPREME COUNCIL (SC) MEETING TO DECIDE QUESTION OF SUCCESSION  
WAS IN FIRST INSTANCE POSTPONED FROM NOVEMBER 27 TO 29 TO ALLOW  
COMMITTEE UNDER SHARJAH RULER SHAIKH SULTAN MORE TIME TO STUDY ISSUE  
OF INDIVIDUAL EMIRATE CONTRIBUTIONS TO FEDERAL BUDGET (SEE REFTEL).  
THEN NOV 28 PRESUMABLY POSITIVE STEP WAS TAKEN WHEN PRIME MINISTER  
AND CABINET RESIGNED TO PERMIT SC TO NAME NEW PRIME MINISTER WHO  
WAS TO BE GIVEN AUTHORITY APPOINT HIS MINISTERS ON BASIS OF MERIT.  
STAGE WAS THUS SET FOR SC MEETING. BUT WHEN RULERS DID MEET ON  
29TH, CONTRARY TO ALL EXPECTATIONS, NO DECISIONS WERE ANNOUNCED.  
RATHER PRESS REPORTED THAT RULERS MET FOR TOTAL OF EIGHT HOURS,  
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FOCUSING ON BUDGET AND BORDER DISPUTE QUESTIONS AS WELL AS ELECTION

OF LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER. BUT ONLY DECISION REPORTED-  
LY TAKEN WAS TO MEET AGAIN NEXT DAY, NOVEMBER 30.

3. PRESS REPORTS THAT LATTER SESSION AGAIN LASTED EIGHT HOURS. IN  
ADDITION TO DECIDING ON RE-ELECTION OF ZAYID AND RASHID. SC IS RE-  
PORTED TO HAVE APPROVED AGREEMENT BETWEEN RASHID AND SULTAN RE-  
WAY TO SOLVE BORDER DIFFICULTIES (BUT NO DETAILS GIVEN)  
AND TO HAVE AGREED AS TO HOW MUCH EACH EMIRATE TO CONTRIBUTE TO  
BUDGET (BUT NO PERCENTAGES PROVIDED). THERE WAS NO MENTION MADE  
OF CHOICE OF NEW PRIME MINISTER.

4. COMMENT: WE WILL BE SEEKING FURTHER DETAILS OF WHAT WENT ON  
DURING THESE SIXTEEN HOURS OF MEETINGS. IT IS SAFE TO ASSUME,  
HOWEVER, THAT DEBATE WAS HOT AND HEAVY AND MUCH REMAINS TO BE DE-  
CIDED. IN FACT ONLY ONE DECISION WAS DEFINITELY REACHED--THE ONE  
THAT HAD TO BE MADE WITH ZAYID'S TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 1. OTHERS  
ARE EITHER CLEARLY NOT RESOLVED (E.G. PRIME MINISTER AND  
HENCE NEW CABINET) OR ARE, AS PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED, SO VAGUE AS TO  
MAKE ONE WONDER IF IN FACT ANYTHING WAS DECIDED. VERY FACT THAT  
SEVEN RULERS WOULD SPEND THIS AMOUNT OF CONCENTRATED TIME IS TOTALLY  
OUT OF NORM AROUND HERE AND REFLECTS SENSE OF TENSION AND STRUGGLE.  
CERTAINLY SHAIKH ZAYID DURING EID CALLS LOOKED DRAWN. WHETHER HE  
HAS ACTUALLY ACHIEVED ANY SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHENING OF THE UNION  
AS RESULT HIS FIVE MONTHS OF EFFORT STILL REMAINS IN DOUBT.  
DICKMAN

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## Message Attributes

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